

University of Toronto, Faculty of Music
Chamber Opera Ensemble

The St. Dymphna Project: Act I



A Workshop Presentation

music: Bruce Nicol
libretto: Sandy Senko

Ensemble Director: Bruce Nicol
Stage Director: Naomi Campbell

Open Rehearsal: Monday, April 1, 1996
7:30 pm

Workshop Presentation: Wednesday, April 3, 1996
8:00 pm

The George Ignatieff Theatre
15 Devonshire Place

The University of Toronto, Faculty of Music
Chamber Opera Ensemble
Workshop Presentation of

The St. Dymphna Project: Act I

Music	Bruce Nicol
Libretto	Sandy Senko
Ensemble Director	Bruce Nicol
Stage Director	Naomi Campbell

The Cast

<i>Burn Woman, wife</i>	Bryanna Beale
<i>King</i>	Mark Howard
<i>Jester</i>	Elizabeth McDonald
<i>Shy Man, Gereborn</i>	Colin Roche
<i>Dymphna</i>	Jessica Severn

The Ensemble

Anthony Rapoport, viola; Nancy Wood, flute
Jeffrey Rodrigues, guitar; Antti Rislakki, percussion
Marco Lekkas, sample keyboard

The St. Dymphna Project is based on the 6th century Irish princess who became the patron saint of the insane. We have grounded the work in the traditional story, depicting the death of Dymphna's mother, her pagan father's pursuit and her flight to Belgium to uphold her religious convictions. Weaving throughout this narrative is the world of the insane, set in a time and place unknown. This parallel realm, initially unseen by the traditional characters, interacts with them as the tale unfolds, finally bringing the story into the world of insanity.

An infirmary for the mentally disordered, founded on the site of St. Dymphna's martyrdom, in the town of Gheel, Belgium, remains to this day. As well, A League of St. Dymphna established in Ohio offers spiritual support the mentally ill. St. Dymphna's principal feast is observed on May 15.

This evening we will present a workshop of the first act of The St. Dymphna Project.

Bruce Nicol's opera, *The Trojan Women* recently received its critically acclaimed premier production in Winnipeg, and will be workshopped by Opera Atelier this June. Current projects include a Yuletide dramatic work for the Arbour Oak Trio, and a semi-dramatic piece for the medieval performance group Sine Nomine. Bruce teaches music at the Allan Howard Waldorf School in Toronto, and is completing his doctorate at U of T with Gustav Ciamaga.

Sandy Senko received her Master of Fine Arts in playwriting at York University. Her show, *Sun and Moon* will be performed at the Toronto Fringe Festival this summer. *The St. Dymphna Project* is her first libretto.

Recent credits of **Naomi Campbell** include *The Freud Project* (Theatre Passe Muraille, Producer/Stage Manager), *Not Spain* (TPM/The Grand/SNAP Productions, Co-Director/Producer), *Nothing But the Larks* (Wild Excursions Performance, Producer), *Frida K.* (Tarragon, Asst. Director/Sound Design) *Through the Eyes* (Nightswimming, Producer/Stage Manager), *Controlling Interest* (Platform 9/TPM, Film Production) *The Cold War* (VideoCabaret, Stage Manager), *The Monument* (Necessary Angel/Canadian Stage/MTC, Stage Manager) and *The Chocolate Bath* (The Believer Project, Producer/Stage Manager).

Bryanna Beale is currently completing her bachelor of music degree from U. of T., with a minor in English. She has participated in all three Faculty of Music choral ensembles: Women's chorus, Symphony chorus, and the MacMillan singers. She has particularly enjoyed her experiences in various world music ensembles: African drumming and dancing, Balinese Gamelan, and the Balkan vocal chorus. Last year she was a member of the University Community Player's production of *Jesus Christ Superstar*, and she previously worked with Bruce Nicol in the 1994 presentation of his chamber opera *The Trojan Women*. In future she plans to continue her vocal studies with Jean MacPhail, pursue her interests in theatre, and work on cleaning those doors of perception!

Bass **Mark Howard** is in his second year of a Bachelor of Music Education Degree at the University of Toronto, Faculty of Music studying with Lynn Blazer.

Elizabeth McDonald is in her Fourth Year of the Bachelor of Music Program in Performance at the University of Toronto. She has participated in masterclasses given by Richard Armstrong, Ingemar Korjus and Edith Mathis. Elizabeth has sung in the Quinte Arts Council series, Sopranos in Concert and has been a soloist with the North York Concert Orchestra, and Jubal's Lyre Ensemble. She studies with Mary Morrison.

Baritone **Colin Roche** is in his fourth year of a Bachelor of Performance Degree at the University of Toronto, Faculty of Music studying with Jo-Anne Bentley.

Jessica Severin is two short weeks away from completing an Honours Bachelor of Music Degree at the University of Toronto, studying with Helen Simmie at the Royal Conservatory of Music. She is the 1995 recipient of the Clementina Savro Memorial Award. Jessica has performed in a number of productions at the Shaw Festival, including *1984*, *Passion*, *Poison* and *Petri Faction*, *Tonight We Improvise* and *Cavalcade*. She was also a chorus member in Bruce Nicol's 1994 production, *The Trojan Women*.

Anthony Rapoport has performed contemporary music in Toronto with Critical Band, Continuum, Esprit, The Composers' Orchestra, and on a CD of the music of Udo Kazemetz, and in New York at the Juilliard School's Focus! Festival and with Continuum (New York). He has participated in premieres of chamber works by Terry Riley, Malcolm Goldstein and Frank Zappa. He has twice received awards from the Alliance for New Canadian Music Projects' Contemporary Showcase. As a composer, he had had many works performed, including a *Viola Concerto*. Anthony studied viola with Paul Armin in Toronto and with Lillian Fuchs at Juilliard, where he also studied contemporary music performance with Paul Zukofsky and Joel Sachs, receiving the Doctor of Musical Arts degree in 1991.

Nancy Wood is in her third year of a Bachelor of Performance Degree at the University of Toronto, Faculty of Music. She is a member of the University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra as well as various chamber ensembles. Nancy is presently studying with Susan Hoepfner.

Jeffrey Rodrigues is in his third year of a Bachelor of Performance Degree at the University of Toronto, Faculty of Music. Jeff is presently studying with Norbert Kraft.

Antti Rislakki is a 24 year old Finnish percussionist. He started studying percussion at the age of seven, and studied three years at the Conservatory in Tampere. He is the member of two Finnish youth orchestras. This year Antti is special student at the Faculty of Music, concentrating only on performance. Next year he will begin his studies at the Sibelius Academy, Finland's top training institution.

Marcos Lekkas is currently completing his doctorate of music at the Faculty of Music, University of Toronto studying with Gustav Ciamaga.